

From;
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Please except my apologies for not sharing my thoughts with you in person, but since I was just recently diagnosed with Influenza A I believe you will understand why I chose not to come to Helena.

What I have to share is very simple. I have been working in the trenches at a high school for the past 5 years. During that term of service I have witnessed bullying in nearly every form possible. Bullying is a real problem in schools all over Montana. Our students deserve to receive an education in an environment where they feel safe and unless they feel safe they will never be able to achieve their best. At Sentinel High School we are very diligent and successful at mediating these instances of bullying, but I also know that for every case we mediate there is probably several we never know about. There is hardly a week that goes by that myself or the Dean of Students isn't asked to investigate an allegation of bullying and we follow up with every instance we know of.

I am writing you because I want you to know that bullying is a real problem in Montana Schools and I feel this bill may be a step in the right direction to try and combat that problem. By passing this bill you send the message that Montana's government understands bullying is a problem and wants to do something about it. You set guidelines for Montana schools so they will have a standardized set of policies to show they understand bullying is a problem and are willing to be proactive in trying to prevent bullying. Through this process hopefully the message is sent to Montana students; We care, we believe you, please tell us what is happening so we can help you.

Thank you in advance for you support,

Officer Patrick Malone